DESIGNING FLOWER BEDS with COLORS

Good flower bed designs incorporate many different features

TEXTURE

COLOR

SHAPE

TEXTURE

- Relative surface “feel” or “look”
- On plants, texture comes from
  - Leaves
  - Twigs
  - Bark
- Texture also comes from
  - Rocks
  - Pavement
  - Structures

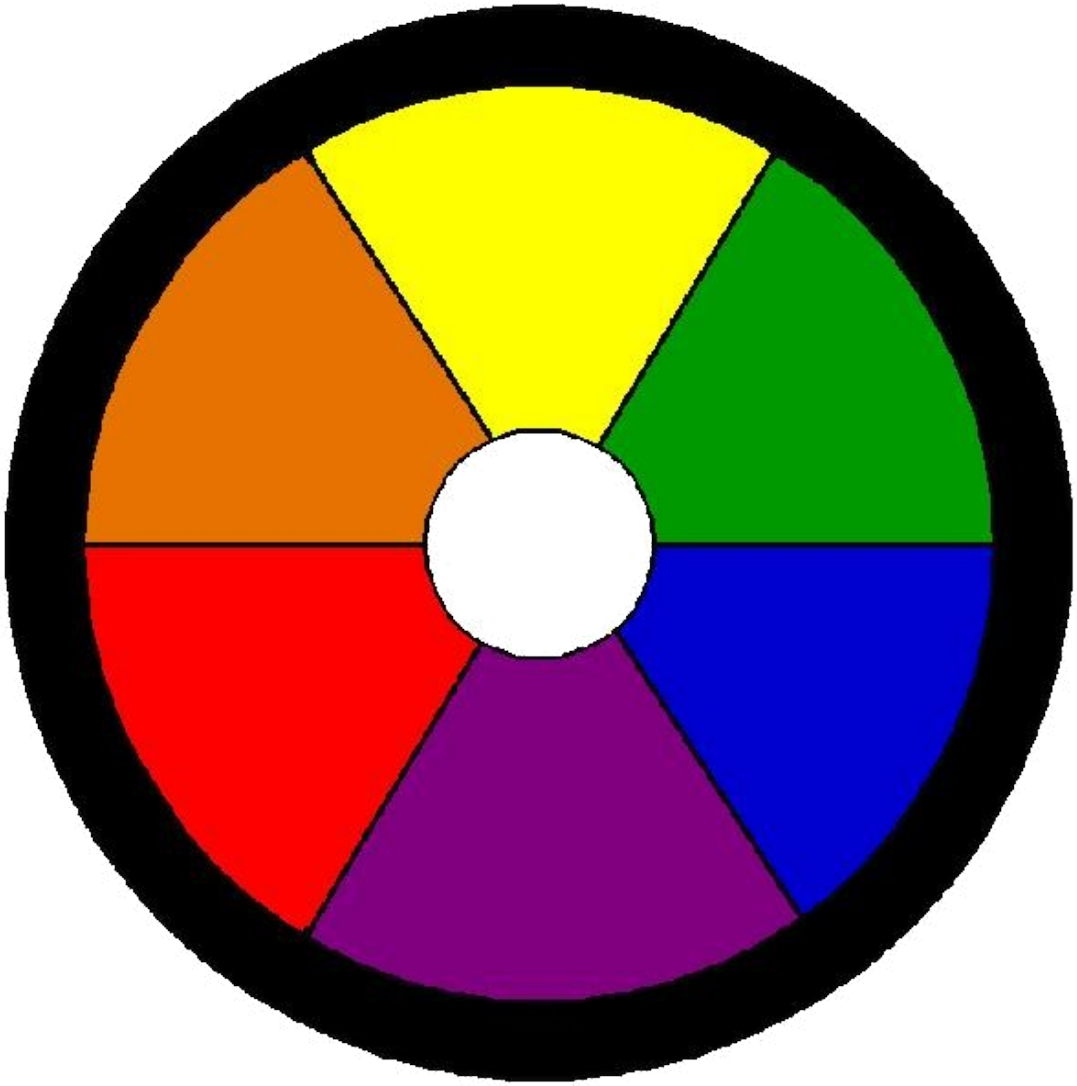
SHAPE

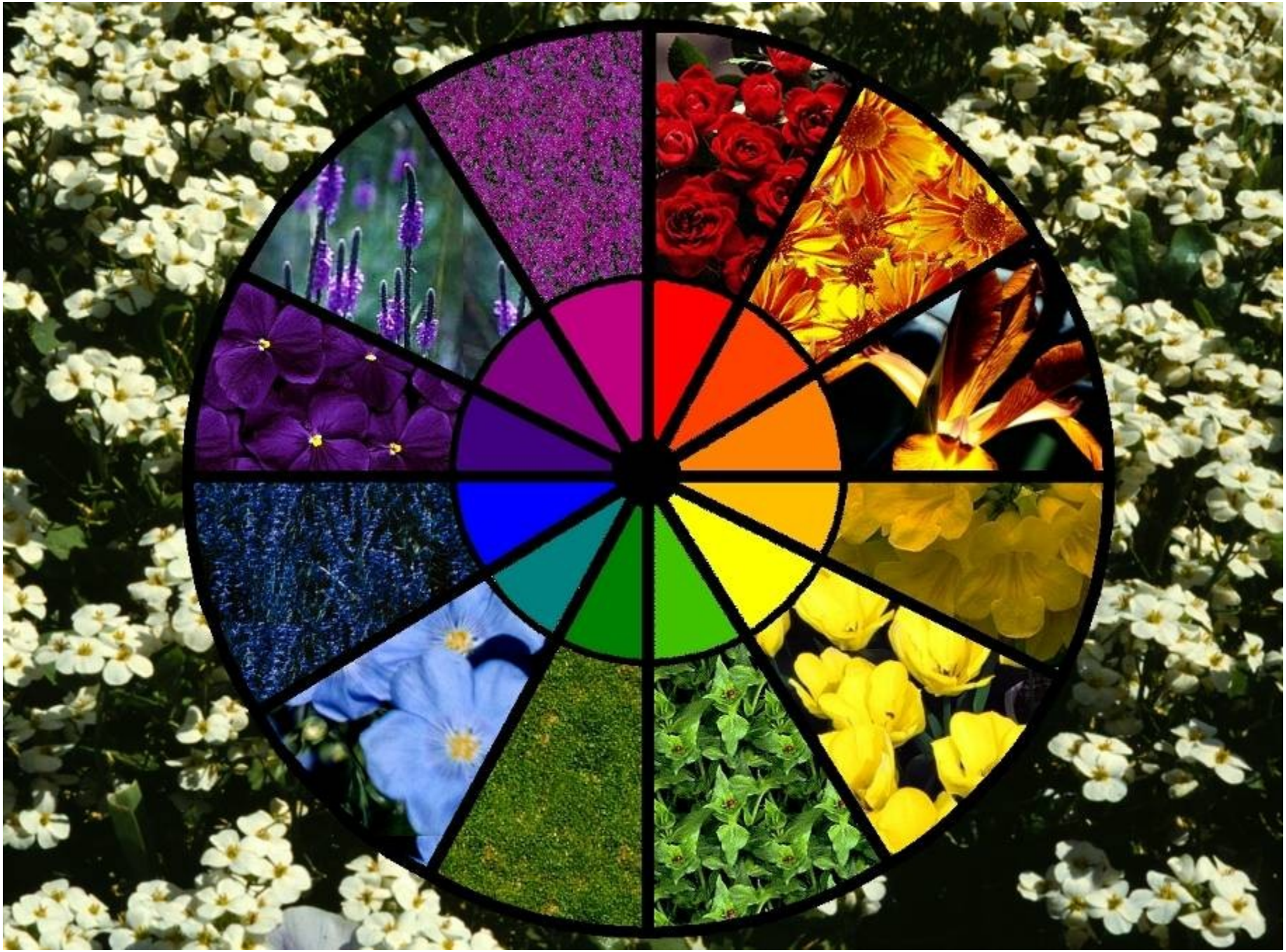
- Plant outline form in three dimensions
- Determined by line direction and arrangement of plant parts
  - Ascending forms emphasize the vertical plane
  - Spreading forms emphasize the horizontal plane

COLOR

- Emphasizes specific areas of the garden by leading your eye through the garden
- Ties together plant materials, natural features, buildings and hardscapes by repetition of colors
- Creates areas that seem warm and inviting or subdued and featureless
- Evokes great appeal and response
- Compliments other design criteria

Color Wheel

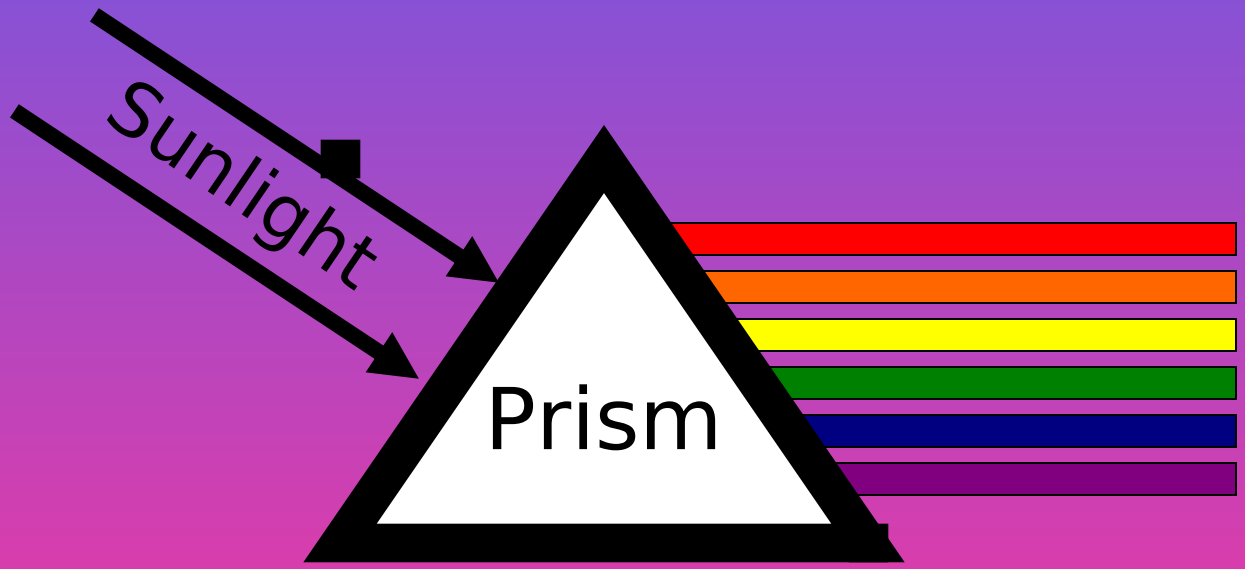




Basic Understanding of Colors

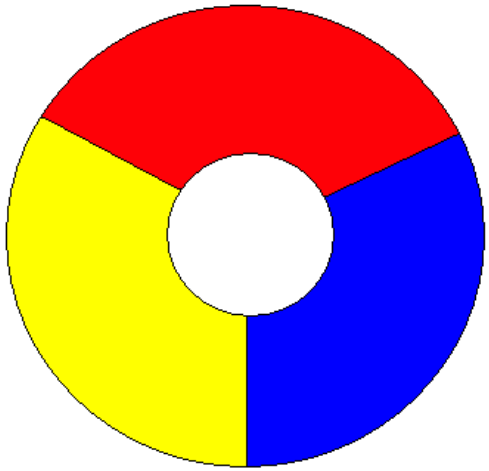
- Allows you to select plant materials that blend well together
- Many plants show different colors at various times of the year
- Seasonal color is a very important landscape feature
- Flowers show the most color but leaves, bark, fruits, buds and seeds also show color

Color Results from Refracted Light



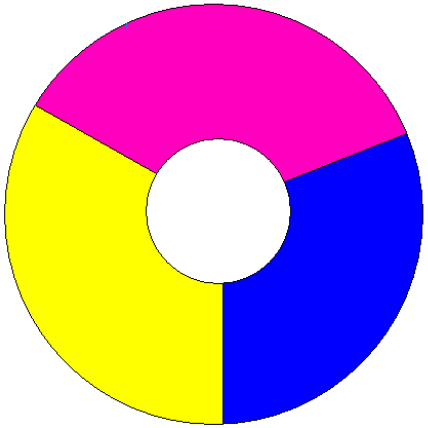
Fact: There are 3 Primary colors

- Fiction
  - These are the three



True primary colors

- A true primary color is as close to the color of the light spectrum as possible without any overlap.



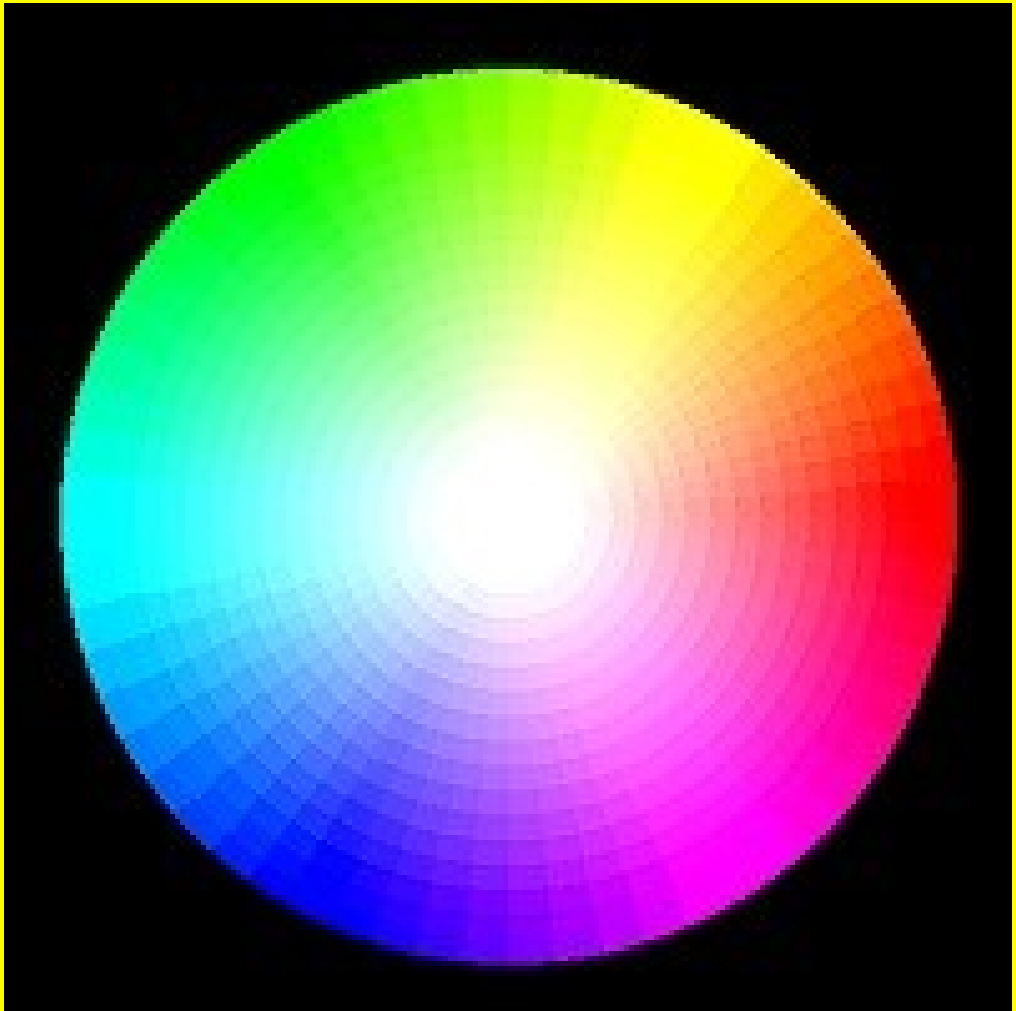
Red is red is red???

- What is red?
- True red is a *cooler* color than the crayola red we think of.
- Paint and dye colors are composed of chemicals either man made or natural that are trying to replicate the color of light.

True Primaries must form true secondaries

- True Primaries can be determined by mixing them to get secondary colors.
- Secondary Colors are 50-50 splits of primary colors. True secondary colors are vibrant not dulled.
- Who has mixed poster paint to get the color purple? What happened? Why?
- Secondary colors that are not vibrant have one color that is not a true primary in their mix.

Color Schemes are determined by their position on the color wheel



How many colors are there?

- The Pantone company has cataloged over 968,000 colors that our eyes can detect.
- These are made from various combinations of colors, including those with pure chroma and those that are neutralized by the addition of other colors.

Primary Colors

- Red (magenta)
- Yellow
- Blue (cyan)

Secondary Colors
Created by equal amounts of the two connecting primary colors

- Orange
- Green
- Purple

Blend well

White

- Reflects all color
- Difficult to design and maintain
- Best combined with other flowers as accents

White Flowers Are Difficult

White Flowers Are Difficult

Black

- Absorbs all color
- Very few totally black flowers or plants
- They can look like holes in the landscape
- Areas usually come from introduced, man-made features

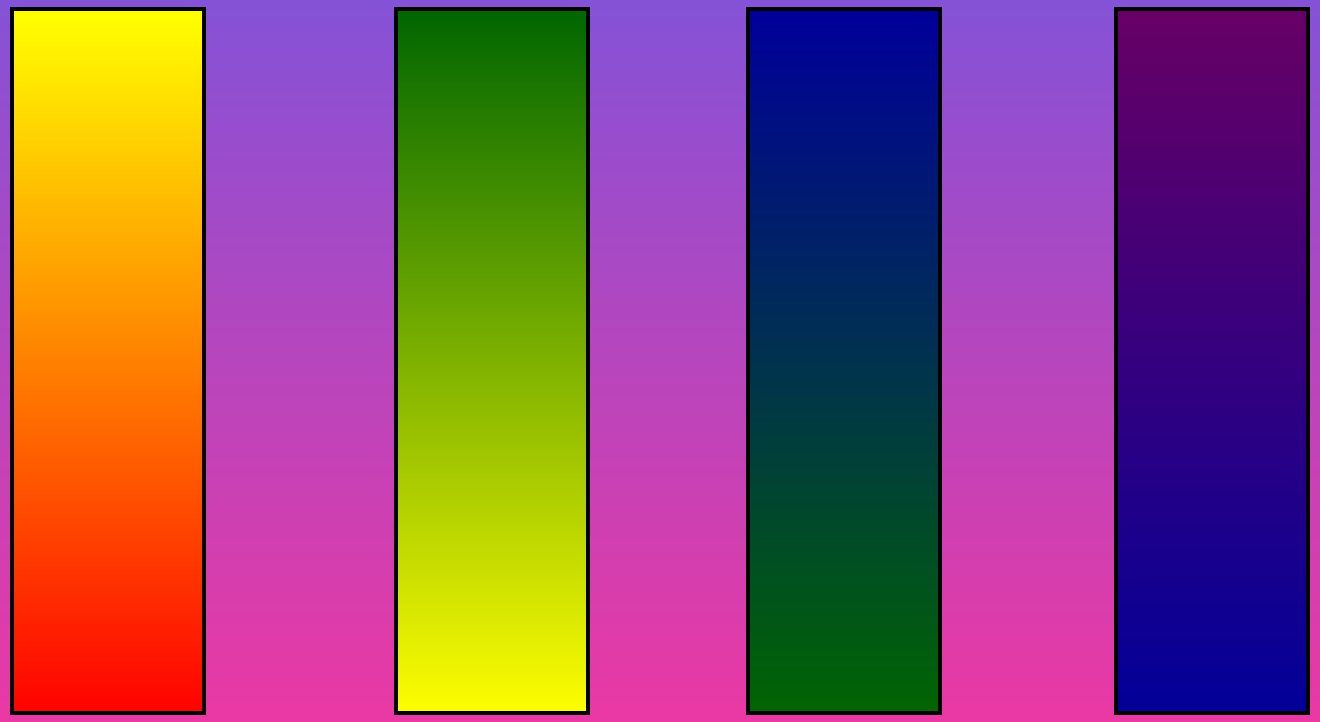
Black Flowers

Black Foliage Color

Hue

The color with white or black added to it often called a tint or tone

Shades of a color



Value

An assigned number for a color

0 127 255

Intensity

The apparent luminosity of a color or saturation. The color is not mixed with anything but is pure chroma

Warm Colors

- Red
- Yellow (The color the eye sees first)
- Orange

Represent earth tones and are usually easy to utilize together. (Because the eye does not see them as quickly.)

Cool Colors

- Green
- Blue
- Violet

How you combine colors creates an emotional response to the combination. Clashing colors are vibrant and exciting while other transitions are more soothing.

Monochromatic

- A composition of the hues and values of one color
- Puts you to sleep
- Don’t use to emphasize a planting area.

Monochromatic Schemes

- Are color schemes using one color with white or black added.
- The best way to successfully use a monochromatic scheme is to vary the color temperature and or value of the single color in order to prevent boredom

Contrasting

- Opposites on the color wheel
  - Red and Green
  - Orange and Blue
  - Purple and Yellow
  - Contrasting colors are vibrant and exciting

Complimentary

- Two steps over from another color on the wheel
- Complimentary compositions signify
  - High energy
  - Action
  - Vigor
- These are more difficult to use in the design process

Complementary colors make each other vibrate and standout.

Analogous

- Next to each other on the color wheel
- Peaceful
- Restful
- Sophisticated
- If in doubt on your design process, choose these colors

Complementary colors make each other vibrate and standout.

Character

- Colors send a message
- Create a mood

Ratio

- Color has visual weight

Ratio

- A 50-50 split of red and green is obnoxious while a 70-30 split is more comfortable. This varies with the colors. Blue and orange is 60-40, and purple and yellow is 70-30. This is because of the intensity of the colors)

Ratio

- Darker colors appear heavier than lighter colors
- In landscapes, darker colors disappear from a distance so dark leafed plants need good contrast to show

Ratio

- Warmer colors appear to come forward while cooler colors appear to recede
- Yellow is the most visible color. If you want to emphasize something, use yellow plants around it

Color is most often “neutralized” by:

- The addition of the complimentary color to dull the original chroma.

A Good check for a good design is to take a black and white picture!


THE END